



# Global Environment Facility

## Summary of Document GEF/ME/C.28/1

### GEF Evaluation Office: Progress Report from the Director

#### Recommended Council Decision

The Council, having reviewed document GEF/ME/C.28/1 *GEF Evaluation Office: Progress Report from the Director* and having taken note of the work on on-going evaluations, the implementation of the GEF M&E policy, the consultative process and the Office's international cooperation and knowledge management activities, requests the Evaluation Office to:

1. Continue to develop the country portfolio evaluations
2. Present a proposal for an Agency Performance Overview Matrix at the Council session of December 2006.

#### Executive Summary

1. The GEF Evaluation Office is presently conducting a series of evaluations on cross-cutting issues, institutional procedures and principles, country level support and impact. The Office found some of the evaluations proposed for this year more complex than initially thought, requiring development of appropriate methodologies and approaches.

2. The **Joint Evaluation of the GEF Activity Cycle and Modalities** and the evaluation of **Incremental Cost Calculation** are on track and reports will be presented to the December 2006 meeting of Council. After initial steps to develop the approach paper for the **Impact Evaluation**, an extensive additional effort has been undertaken to develop an appropriate evaluation methodology for a first pilot evaluation to be undertaken in FY07. The **Capacity Building Evaluation** did not start in FY06 as originally proposed due to the extra attention in staff time that needed to be devoted to the Evaluation of the GEF Support to the Cartagena Protocol. Before the end of FY06 an approach paper will be published on the website. The evaluation itself will start in the first half of FY07.

3. The Office completed the first **Country Portfolio Evaluation** in Costa Rica. The final report is presented to Council as GEF/ME/C.28/5. The experience in Costa Rica clearly indicated that this type of evaluation is feasible and valid. The report strongly recommends that this type of evaluation should be continued. The Office is now preparing terms of reference for

future Country Portfolio Evaluations based on the experience gathered in Costa Rica. Some of the lessons gathered include the importance of ensuring support of focal points, collaborating with consultants that are based in the country and have independent credibility, and the need to develop clear and transparent criteria to select countries for portfolio evaluations.

4. The Office is developing better tools and methodologies on a continuous basis to keep the standards of our work on a high professional level. Furthermore, the development of an **Agency Performance Overview Matrix** has started for inclusion in the Annual Performance Report in future years, containing indicators on project outcomes and sustainability, on processes affecting results and on the quality of M&E, as well as on learning. The purpose will be to provide the GEF Council with an independent assessment of the performance of the Implementing Agencies, Executing Agencies and the GEF Secretariat. On the basis of consultations with these agencies, a proposal will be presented to Council at its December 2006 session,

5. The new **GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy** was approved by Council through a written procedure on February 6, 2006. The Office is mainstreaming the new M&E policy through-out the GEF system in four ways: dissemination, development of guidance and administrative procedures, support of monitoring, and oversight and performance feedback.

6. The Council at its meeting of November 2005 requested the Office to develop a proposal for an **M&E training program** to be presented in June 2006, in order to introduce the new policy and minimum requirements for M&E to the appropriate staff. Consultations held since the approval of the new policy lead to the conclusion that the need for training varies greatly throughout the GEF partnership. Rather than introducing a self-standing training program, the way forward seems to integrate the new M&E policy as much as possible in existing training and introduction programs. This means that no proposal has been formulated for Council's consideration at this moment in time.

7. The consultative process with M&E partners in the GEF is proceeding as planned. An emerging challenge is to interact with independent evaluators in recipient countries. The Office will explore possible ways of reaching out to national evaluation capacities and creating a network through which the GEF can ensure involvement of independent evaluation capacity on the country level. The proposed international workshop on evaluating sustainable development will be an important vehicle for this purpose.

8. The Office has introduced new ways of publishing and disseminating its products. Two series of publications (of Evaluation Reports and of Evaluation Documents) have started and new summaries of evaluations, "Signposts", are now available. The Office will continue to explore possibilities to use the new media to full advantage.

9. The Office is active in various international evaluation forums and meetings to ensure that new developments, international norms and standards and possibilities for collaboration and interaction are taken up. The M&E work in the GEF benefits in two ways. First of all, the highest international norms and standards continue to be applied. Secondly, the joint evaluation of the GEF activity cycle and modalities shows that substantial efficiencies can be achieved through international collaboration where feasible and possible.